

Message Text

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5559

INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEBMOURG

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

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AMEMBASSY REYJAVIK

AMEMBASSY ROME

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C O R R E C T E D C O P Y FOR SUBJECT LINE

EO 11652 GDS

TAGS PFOR

SUBJ CSCE: THE LEVEL OF PHASE III

REFS A) STATE 086851 B) USNATO 2370 C) STATE 089874

1. SUMMARY. THE PRE-EMINENT QUESTION IN CSCE IS THE
LEVEL OF THE THIRD PHASE. A SUMMIT MEETING OF THIRTY-FIVE

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HEADS OF GOVERNMENT WOULD BE UNPRECEDENTED AND WOULD SIGNAL

A SUCCESSFUL CONFERENCE. A LOWER LEVEL WOULD CONSTITUTE A MORE RESERVED JUDGEMENT ON CSCE AND DETENTE IN GENERAL. THIS TELEGRAM REVIEWS THE CHANCES FOR A THIRD PHASE SUMMIT, AND CONSIDERS HOW THIS QUESTION SHOULD BE TREATED DURING THE WEEKS AHEAD. IT RECOMMENDS THAT THE POSSIBILITY OF A THIRD PHASE SUMMIT BE KEPT OPEN, BUT THAT NO COMMITMENTS BE MADE UNTIL CSCE RESULTS ARE KNOWN. END SUMMARY.

2. THE PROBLEM--A THIRD PHASE CSCE SUMMIT WOULD BE UNPRECEDENTED AND WOULD BE THOUGHT BY MANY TO SIGNAL A MAJOR TURNING POINT IN POST-WAR EUROPEAN HISTORY. IT WOULD MEAN THAT THE CSCE PARTICIPATING COUNTRIES HAD JUDGED THE CONFERENCE A SUCCESS, AND WOULD BE SEEN POPULARLY AS THE FORMAL RECOGNITION OF THE END OF THE COLD WAR. A THIRD PHASE AT A LOWER LEVEL WOULD STILL BE A MAJOR EVENT, BUT WOULD NOT HAVE THE SAME SIGNIFICANCE, AND WOULD CONVEY SOME DOUBTS AS TO THE SUCCESS OF CSCE, AND OF DETENTE IN GENERAL. THE LEVEL OF THE THIRD PHASE WILL THUS CONSTITUTE A COLLECTIVE POLITICAL JUDGEMENT OF THE CSCE. MANY DIFFERENT FACTORS WILL INFLUENCE GOVERNMENTS IN MAKING THEIR DECISIONS ON LEVEL, BUT THEIR COLLECTIVE RESPONSE WILL BE A MESSAGE TO THE WORLD ABOUT DETENTE ITSELF, AND THE STATE OF EAST-WEST RELATIONS IN EUROPE.

3. NATIONAL POSITIONS--THE SYMBOLIC IMPORTANCE OF THE LEVEL OF THE THIRD PHASE HAS LEAD THE USSR, AND BREZHNEV HIMSELF, TO EXERT UNUSUAL PRESSURES ON OTHER GOVERNMENTS TO ENCOURAGE A THIRD PHASE SUMMIT. BREZHNEV HAS STAKED MUCH OF HIS PERSONAL PRESTIGE ON A SUMMIT, AND THE WARSAW PACT COUNTRIES AND MANY NEUTRALS, FOR THEIR OWN REASONS, HAVE TAKEN UP THE SAME LINE. THE WESTERN GROUP, LEAD BY TH EC-NINE, HAS TAKEN A MORE RESERVED STANCE. THEY HAVE NOT FLATLY EXCLUDED A SUMMIT, BUT HAVE MADE IT CLEAR THAT THE RESULTS OF THE CONFERENCE WOULD HAVE TO JUSTIFY IT. MORE RECENTLY, THEY HAVE TOLD US THAT THE OVERALL POLITICAL SITUATION WOULD ALSO BE AN IMPORTANT FACTOR FOR THEM IN REACHING THEIR DECISION ON LEVEL.

4. INFLUENTIAL FACTORS--WE BELIEVE THERE ARE ESSENTIALLY THREE CONSIDERATIONS WHICH WILL INFLUENCE THE COLLECTIVE

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DECISION ON THE LEVEL OF THE THIRD PHASE:

- 1) CSCE RESULTS;
- 2) THE INTERNATIONAL SITUATION;
- 3) DOMESTIC POLITICS.

MOST DELEGATIONS HERE, EVEN THE EASTERN ONES, INSIST THAT THE RESULTS OF THE CONFERENCE WILL DETERMINE THE LEVEL OF THE THIRD PHASE, AND THIS IS UNDOUBTEDLY A KEY FACTOR. THE WARSAW PACT COUNTRIES WERE CONVINCED FROM THE BEGINNING

THAT THE RESULTS WOULD BE IMPORTANT ENOUGH TO JUSTIFY A SUMMIT, AND IT IS REASONABLE TO ASSUME THAT THE SOVIETS WILL GIVE JUST ENOUGH IN TERMS OF CSCE RESULTS TO ENSURE THE THIRD PHASE SUMMIT THEY CONSIDER SO IMPORTANT. THIS PROBABLE TENDENCY GIVES THE EXTERNAL FACTORS ADDED IMPORTANCE. IN FACT, EUROPEAN POLITICAL LEADERS WILL BASE THEIR DECISIONS NOT ONLY ON THE CONFERENCE RESULTS AND THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THEIR REPRESENTATIVES HERE, BUT ALSO ON EXTERNAL FACTORS WHICH ARE BEYOND THE CONTROL OR COGNIZANCE OF THE CSCE ITSELF. IT IS ONLY REALISTIC TO RECOGNIZE, FOR EXAMPLE, THAT A CONFERENCE OF THIRTY-FIVE HEADS OF GOVERNMENT COULD NOT BE CONVENED WHILE A MAJOR INTERNATIONAL CONFLICT IS RAGING ELSEWHERE IN THE WORLD, OR WHEN INTERNATIONAL INCIDENTS OR DISAPPOINTMENTS HAVE CREATED DIFFICULTIES BETWEEN PARTICIPATING STATES. LIKEWISE, DOMESTIC POLITICAL CONSIDERATIONS WILL PLAY AS IMPORTANT A ROLE IN THE DECISIONS OF EUROPEAN LEADERS AS THEY WILL IN OUR OWN--A MAJOR SPY SCANDAL, A GOVERNMENT CRISIS, EXTREME SOCIAL UNREST--THESE AND OTHER SIMILAR INCIDENTS COULD MAKE THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A GOVERNMENTAL DECISION FOR OR AGAINST A SUMMIT. BUT, BARRING MAJOR INCIDENTS OF THIS KIND, WE BELIEVE THAT NO EUROPEAN LEADER WILL, IN THE FINAL ANALYSIS, REFUSE TO GO TO HELSINKI. EACH HAS HIS OWN REASONS TO GO, AND IT IS DIFFICULT TO IMAGINE ONE WHO COULD MUSTER THE INDEPENDENCE AND POLITICAL WILL TO REFUSE. THIS TENDENCY APPEARS INEVITABLE, IN SPITE OF THE NEGATIVE RECOMMENDATIONS WHICH MANY GOVERNMENTS WILL UNDOUBTEDLY RECEIVE FROM THE PROFESSIONALS INVOLVED IN CSCE.

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5. MECHANICS--ACCORDING TO ITS MANDATE, THE SECOND PHASE OF THE CONFERENCE WILL HAVE TO MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE LEVEL OF THE THIRD PHASE BEFORE IT COMPLETES ITS WORK. TECHNICALLY, THESE RECOMMENDATIONS COULD BE DRAFTED ON THE LAST NIGHT OF PHASE II, BUT MOST DELEGATIONS HERE ARE ANXIOUS TO FIX LEVEL AND TIMING EARLIER THAN THAT, IN ORDER TO PIN DOWN THEIR LEADERS' CALENDARS. RECOMMENDATIONS ON LEVEL, LIKE ALL OTHER CSCE DECISIONS, WILL REQUIRE CONSENSUS APPROVAL. ESSENTIALLY, THERE ARE THREE POSSIBLE RECOMMENDATIONS:

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1) THIRD PHASE AT "THE HIGHEST LEVEL";
2) THIRD PHASE AT FOREIGN MINISTERS' LEVEL;
3) EACH COUNTRY REPRESENTED AT LEVEL IT CONSIDERS APPROPRIATE. CONSENSUS WILL NOT BE POSSIBLE ON A RECOMMENDATION FOR A THIRD PHASE AT FOREIGN MINISTERS' LEVEL, SINCE THE WARSAW PACT COUNTRIES WILL INSIST ON A SUMMIT. IF SOME WESTERN COUNTRIES RESIST THE IDEA OF A SUMMIT, CONSENSUS MAY ALSO NOT BE POSSIBLE ON THIS LEVEL. THE THIRD ALTERNATIVE THEREFORE SEEMS MORE AND MORE LIKELY TO EMERGE IN SOME FORM AS THE EVENTUAL COMPROMISE SOLUTION. SUCH A RECOMMENDATION WOULD MEAN THAT MANY COUNTRIES--PROBABLY A MAJORITY-- WOULD BE REPRESENTED AT THE HIGHEST LEVEL ANYWAY, AND THE GATHERING WOULD UNDOUBTEDLY TAKE ON MANY OF THE CHARACTERISTICS OF A SUMMIT. IN ADDITION, EVEN SOME GOVERNMENTS WHICH OPPOSE THE IDEA OF A SUMMIT WOULD JOINT IT IN SUCH A SITUATION.

6. TACTICS--OUR ALLIES, ESPECIALLY THE EC-NINE, HAVE OPPOSED THE IDEA OF A THIRD PHASE AT THE HIGHEST LEVEL, BUT HAVE LEFT THE POSSIBILITY OF A SUMMIT OPEN AS AN

ENCOURAGEMENT TO SOVIET CONCESSIONS. THE NINE HAVE FORMALIZED THIS POSITION IN A PAPER APPROVED BY THEIR POLITICAL DIRECTORS. THE REASON FOR THIS ATTITUDE IS CLEAR: THE SOVIETS HAVE MADE FEW CONCESSIONS IN CSCE THUS FAR, AND THE LEVEL OF THE THIRD PHASE PROVIDES THE BEST LEVERAGE AVAILABLE TO MAKE THEM DO SO. THE NINE ARE RELUCTANT EVEN TO DISCUSS THE POSSIBILITY OF A THIRD PHASE SUMMIT, BECAUSE, AS JOBERT HAS SAID, "IDEAS FLY". ALL DELEGATES HERE ARE AWARE THAT THE SOVIETS WILL MAKE NO FURTHER CONCESSIONS ONCE THEY CONCLUDE THAT THE THIRD PHASE SUMMIT IS IN THE BAG.

7. US POSITION--FOR THE REASONS SET OUT ABOVE, IT IS MOST IMPORTANT THAT WE MAKE NO COMMITMENT ON THE LEVEL OF THE THIRD PHASE UNTIL OUR ALLIES ARE READY TO DO SO, AND THAT WE MAKE IT CLEAR, IN OUR STATEMENTS AND IN OUR ACTIONS, THAT NO SUCH COMMITMENTS HAVE BEEN MADE. PRESS LEAKS, AMBIGUOUS BACKGROUNDEERS, PRESSURES TO TAKE EARLY DECISIONS, AND OTHER SIMILAR ACTS, WILL ALL BE INTERPRETED AS INDICATIONS THAT US COMMITMENTS HAVE BEEN MADE, AND THAT WESTERN EFFORTS WITHIN THE CONFERENCE ITSELF HAVE

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BEEN CORRESPONDINGLY UNDERCUT. LIKE OUR ALLIES, WE SHOULD CONTINUE TO HOLD OUT THE POSSIBILITY OF A THIRD PHASE SUMMIT, TO ENCOURAGE POSITIVE CSCE RESULTS, AND WE SHOULD BE PREPARED TO KEEP OUR OPTIONS OPEN UNTIL THE LATEST POSSIBLE MOMENT. INFORMAL DISCUSSIONS OF THIS SUBJECT AT NATO SHOULD BE AS LOW-KEY AS POSSIBLE, AND EVERY OPPORTUNITY SHOULD BE TAKEN TO MAKE IT CLEAR, TO OUR ALLIES AND TO THE SOVIETS, THAT THERE WILL BE NO CSCE SUMMIT WITHOUT POSITIVE AND CONCRETE CONFERENCE RESULTS.

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